



River Findhorn District Salmon Fishery Board

Clerk: Anthony Laing Administrator: Clare Walker

Fisheries Office, Logie Steading, Dunphail, Forres, IV36 2QN

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Minute of the Board Meeting

Held on Monday 14th August 2023 at 10.30am
at Coulmony House.

Present:

Anthony Laing -AnL (Chairman)

Alasdair Laing - AL

Mark Laing – ML

Alex Leven – AIL

Colin Glynn-Percy - CGP

Andrew Howard – AH

Michael Barron – MB

Philip Arkell – PA

In attendance:

Alister Taylor (AT) (Bailiff)

Sean Mclean (SM) (Head Bailiff)

Robert Laughton (RL) – Director, FNLRT

Clare Walker (CW) (Administrator)

Elle Adams (EA) (Living Alive)

Guy Harris (GH) (FWI Project Officer)

Pieter van West (PvW) (Guest Speaker)

A	Item	Action
1.	<p>Apologies: Campbell Ross, Murray Wilson, David Paton, Colin Cawdor</p> <p>AnL opened the meeting and welcomed Pieter van West who had kindly agreed to attend the meeting and AGM to give a talk on <i>Saprolegnia</i>.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of Meeting held on 15th May 2023</p> <p>The minutes were approved, subject to a minor correction. CW to make the required correction and publish minutes to the FNLRT website.</p>	CW
3.	<p>Matters Arising not Covered Below</p> <p>AnL had asked Rob Hoskin whether he would like to join the FDSFB, he has not made a final decision but will attend the AGM.</p> <p>RL has no further information on the outcomes of the tagging project.</p>	
4.	<p>Budget and Finance</p> <p><i>Draft Accounts for year ending Jan 2023</i> – The draft accounts had been circulated to the Board prior to the Board meeting. These were approved. CW will arrange for them to be signed and sent to Scottish Government and published on the website.</p> <p><i>budget/cash flow update</i> – CW provided an updated budget and cashflow. The FDSFB finances are currently around £3.5k over budget.</p> <p>AL asked whether the FDSFB had adopted a cloud accounting system such as Xero. CW confirmed that they had not but would look into the feasibility of doing so for review to the next Board meeting in November.</p>	CW
5.	<p>Revaluation of the Findhorn Rateable Value</p> <p>CW had circulated a summary spreadsheet of the changes to the rateable value of the beats on the river Findhorn. It was noted that the rateable values of the FAA's beats had increased significantly. MB confirmed that the FAA intends to appeal.</p>	
6.	<p>River Matters</p> <p>a. <i>Policy Review for Fishing with High Temperatures</i> – The Board discussed whether to instate a policy for fishing if the river gets above a certain temperature. FNLRT have recently installed a temperature monitoring network in the Upper catchment with plans</p>	

	<p>to expand this, RL is also in discussions with a supplier who have gauges that will provide real time data. SM confirmed that the Bailiffs take regular temperature readings. The experience of the Bailiffs and Angling Associations was that, when temperatures reach high levels, anglers tend not to fish. AnL and RL will discuss a temperature monitoring plan. Advice on fishing in high temperatures is provided by FMS.</p>	AnL/RL
7.	<p>AOCB SM confirmed that the result of the Scottish Government’s river grading is that the Findhorn remains a grade one river. The current grading system takes a five year average from annual catch returns. The Scottish Government is currently developing a better grading system which will factor in more appropriate variables, including building in the data from the NEP. It was generally felt that the current grading system does not adequately reflect the health of the fish populations within the river. Losses to disease have been significant in the past two years. Altering the current catch and release policy could be a way to assist the falling populations, however, this has to be balanced against any potential economic income. The Board agreed to draft an amendment to the current conservation policy to outline the plight of the fish and strongly encourage voluntary 100% catch and release. AnL and CW to draft these changes for review at the November Board meeting.</p> <p>SM also highlighted the importance of biosecurity measures in the prevention of the spread of disease, including Saprolegnia, and emphasised how important it was that estates and beats enforce these measures.</p> <p>PA informed the Board that Cawdor had been approached by Trout and Salmon magazine to do an article around the fishing experience on the estate. Cawdor are keen that the messaging within the article aligns with that of the FDSFB.</p>	AnL/CW
8	<p>Date of 2023 Meetings November 13th 2023 at 10:30am, The Long Room, Logie Steading – Board Meeting</p>	